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Department of State

INCOMING TELEGRAM

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ACTION ARA-16

INFO	OCT-01	ADS-00	AID-07	INR-10	SS-15	OIC-02	CIAE-00
	EB-08	DODE-00	H-01	IO-14	NSCE-00	NSAE-00	SSO-00
	SY-05	HA-05	TRSE-00	PM-09	PA-01	DCT-02	OMB-01
	INRE-00	SAL-01	SYE-00	SP-02	SPRS-02	/103 W	

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O R 082312Z APR 81
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 3246
INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA
AMEMBASSY MANAGUA
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE
AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTSEPAN/INTAFF
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION GENEVA
USICA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SAN SALVADOR 2671

USICA FOR AR-DACHI

DEPT PASS TO OTHER ARA AND EUR POSTS AS REQUIRED

E.O. 12065: GDS 4-8-87 (DION, MARK) OR-M
TAGS: MILI PINS PINT ES
SUBJECT: DEFENSE MINISTER GARCIA'S SPEECH TO AMERICAN CHAMBER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

REF: SAN SALVADOR 2658

1. (U) OCM ATTENDED APRIL 8TH SPEECH BY SALVADORAN MINISTER OF DEFENSE JOSE GUILLERMO GARCIA TO THE AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AT THE CAMINO REAL HOTEL. WE WILL PROVIDE MAJOR EXCERPTS BY SEPTEL BUT MOST IMPORTANT THEMES WERE (1) SALVADORAN ARMED FORCES' PROFESSIONALSIM, DEDICATION, AND DEVOTION TO THE PEOPLE; (2) MILITARY ASSISTANCE FROM THE U.S. WELCOMED AND NEEDED BUT MAJOR BATTLES HAD BEEN WON BY THE ARMED FORCES ALONE; AND (3) THAT A COUP FROM ANY SIDE WOULD "SINK THE COUNTRY" AND LEAD TO A LEFTIST TAKE-OVER.

2. (U) IN A SLIGHTLY MORE DEFENSIVE TONE THAN USUAL, DEFENSE MINISTER GARCIA ADMITTED "FAILURES AND ABUSES" ON THE PART OF THE ARMED FORCES BUT INSISTED THAT FOREIGN CRITICS FOCUSED EXCLUSIVELY ON BAD NEWS AND REFUSED TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE GOOD THINGS THE ARMED FORCES HAD ACHIEVED. HE LAUDED THE STRENGTH AND DETERMINATION OF THE ORDINARY SOLDIER, PRAISED THE HIGH PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE OF THE OFFICER CORPS AND INSISTED THAT CONSTANT EFFORTS WERE BEING MADE TO LIMIT EXCESSES ON THE PART OF THE SECURITY FORCES. DURING THE QUESTION AND ANSWER PERIOD, COLONEL GARCIA ADDRESSED A QUESTION REGARDING THE MURDER OF SOME 23 PEOPLE IN SOYAPANGO THE NIGHT OF APRIL 7; GARCIA SAID THAT THE COMMUNIQUE FROM THE SECURITY UNIT INVOLVED HAD BEEN PUBLISHED AND THAT HE HAD NO MORE DETAILS AT THIS TIME BUT THAT AN INTENSIVE INVESTIGATION WOULD BE MADE OF THIS INCIDENT.

3. (U) IN A MAJOR PORTION OF HIS SPEECH AND LATER IN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS, GARCIA INSISTED THAT ANY ARMED FORCES WOULD WELCOME MILITARY ASSISTANCE AND THAT DOING SO CARRIED NO IMPLICATION OF DEPENDENCY OR CONTROL. GARCIA STRESSED REPEATEDLY THAT THE SALVADORAN ARMED FORCES HAD DEFEATED THE "FINAL OFFENSIVE" OF JANUARY 10 WITH THEIR OWN RESOURCES AND THAT U.S. MILITARY ASSISTANCE HAD ONLY BEEN RESUMED SOME FIVE DAYS AFTER

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THE MAJOR ASSAULT. HE SAID THAT THIS MATERIEL AID WAS IMPORTANT TO ASSURE THE SUCCESS OF THE GOVERNMENT IN ITS STRUGGLE BUT THAT THE DETERMINATIOUE AND COURAGE OF THE ARMED FOHCES AND THE PECPLE'S REJECTION OF THE LEFTIST APPEALS WERE THE KEY INGREDIENTS FOR DEFEATING THE INSURGENCY. IN THE SPEECH AND LATER, GARCIA ACCEPTED RESPONSIBILITY FOR ACTS AGAINST INNOCENT INDIVIDUALS BY THE ARMED FORCES BUT INSISTED THAT EVERY EFFORT WAS BEING MADE TO CURB THESE ABUSES AND ACCUSED THE LEFT OF AS BAD OR WORSE CONDUCT WHICH THE FOREIGN PRESS TENDED TO IGNORE. HE SAID THAT THE STRUGGLE WOULD BE A LONG ONE AND. THAT DISCIPLINE AND CONVICTION WERE CRUCIAL TO SUCCESS. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, GARCIA ALSO STRESSED THAT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS HAD TO BE RESOLVED AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT COUNTED HEAVILY ON THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR. HE WAS CERTAIN THAT PLANS WERE BEING MADE TO MOBILIZE THEIR SUPPORT. THIS GAINED HIM A ROUND OF APPLAUSE.

NOTE BY OC/T: NOT PASSED ABOVE ADDRESSEES.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SAN SALVADOR 2671

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

6. (U) ASKED THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THERE HAD INDEED BEEN A THREAT OF A RIGHT-WING COUP LAST WEEKEND, COLONEL GARCIA SAID THAT THE THREAT OF A COUP WAS CONSTANT IN EL SALVADOR AND THAT SAN SALVADOR MUST RANK AS THE RUMOR CAPITAL OF THE WORLD FOR SUCH REPORTS. HE MADE SEVERAL LITTLE JOKES ABOUT HOW IF ANY COUP DEPENDED ON HIM, EVERYONE COULD REST EASY BECAUSE HE HAD NO INTEREST IN SUCH GOINGS ON. THEN HE BECAME VERY SERIOUS, SAYING THAT EVERYONE IN HIS AUDIENCE AND EVERYONE BEYOND SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT A COUP IN EL SALVADOR, WHETHER FROM THE RIGHT OR FROM THE LEFT, WOULD "SINK THE COUNTRY" AND LEAD TO A LEFTIST TAKEOVER. GARCIA SAID, WITH GREAT EMPHASIS, "IF A COUP TAKES PLACE HERE, I RECOMMEND THAT YOU ALL PACK YOUR BAGS AND GET OUT AS FAST AS YOU CAN BECAUSE THIS COUNTRY WILL SINK IN A WAVE OF VIOLENCE AND ALL WE HAVE STRUGGLED TO ACHIEVE WILL BE LOST." GARCIA SAID THAT EL SALVADOR WAS NOT ALONE, THAT WHILE IT HAD FEW SUPPORTERS THERE WERE MANY WHO SYMPATHIZED WITH ITS STRUGGLE TO AVOID COMMUNIST TAKEOVER AND THAT EVERYONE ABROAD WATCHED CLOSELY, "MONITORING AND CRITICIZING AND COMMENTING ONLY ABOUT BAD THINGS," WAS NOT HELPFUL BUT GARCIA INSISTED THAT WITHOUT FOREIGN SUPPORT, ESPECIALLY THAT OF THE UNITED STATES, THERE COULD BE NO SURVIVAL. HE ASKED EVERYONE TO "MEDIATE CAREFULLY ON ALL OF THIS FOR IT REPRESENTS MY MOST CAREFUL, THOUGHTFUL ANALYSIS OF WHERE WE STAND."

CHAPIN